



TRANSFORMING OUR PROGRAMS

REDEFINING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTNER GOVERNMENTS

VISION

At the heart of USAID's development work is the core belief that each country must lead its own development journey. Partner governments play an indispensable role in fostering and sustaining that journey. Each government must be committed to and capable of citizen-centered, accountable governance if it is to achieve sustained and inclusive growth, peace, and stability. How USAID engages with each of its partner governments to incentivize commitment and strengthen capacity is therefore essential to reducing partner countries' need for USAID assistance.

REDEFINING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTNER GOVERNMENTS

Through the "Redefining our Relationship with Partner Governments" (RDR) Transformation project, USAID will look for ways to rethink the range of policies, programmatic tools, and other measures we have at our disposal to promote greater commitment from and strengthen the capacity of partner governments as they lead a country's Journey to Self-Reliance.

To fully embrace this vision, the Agency must take a critical look at what we ask of our government counterparts and how we hold them and ourselves equally accountable for results. At the same time, we must consider how to alter our own systems, processes, and approaches to balance necessary due diligence with achieving more progress with governments as true co-partners.

THE THREE WORKSTREAMS

The RDR Working Group is comprised of three interconnected workstreams aimed at improving how USAID staff engage with partner governments to advance the Journey to Self-Reliance:

1. **Incentivizing Government Commitment:** In a perfect world, our agreements should include a development plan with shared goals for the partnership, cost-sharing agreements for all projects and programs, and specific governance milestones agreed upon by both parties. As a country builds greater capacity and commitment to manage its own development, increasingly sophisticated and higher-expectation cost-sharing and governance reforms should also be built into our agreements.
2. **Improving our Programmatic Tools for Strengthening Capacity and Incentivizing Commitment:** The Agency has a number of programmatic tools -- especially government-to-government (G2G) assistance -- that incentivize host country buy-in in countries that exhibit the capacity and commitment to effectively manage external development resources. These modalities have the added benefit of enhancing self-reliance when countries manage and integrate externally-funded program activities into national investment and operational budgets.
3. **Training and Agency Culture:** Sustained engagement with partner governments is staff- and time-intensive and depends on USAID staff to leverage unique skills. USAID must provide the resources, support, and incentives for staff to increase engagement with governments to strengthen commitment and capacity.
4. **Leveraging Other Development Partners:** USAID can facilitate and incentivize host country commitment by convincing other donors to align around supporting governments to manage and finance their development journeys. This includes improving coordination and alignment around common goals and approaches, while limiting redundancies in our programs and requirements.

In summer 2019, the RDR Working Group will put forward recommendations based on these four workstreams on how the Agency can improve how it engages with partner governments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email us at Transformation@USAID.gov